



DID JESUS FEEL LOVED?

I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

Philippians 3:10-11

I wondered to myself: As Jesus hung on the cross, did he feel compassion from anyone? Did anyone at all understand his pain? Did he feel loved? I suspect not, except by a few maybe. We need to grieve for him and all he went through.

When we suffer, does anyone understand *our* pain?

I love Jesus—he who suffered and knows my own suffering so well! He who loved so much that he gave his life for me, losing love he himself once had. Being rejected and abandoned by those who had once loved him must have been the worst part—worse than the physical pain he endured.

Have you ever been rejected and abandoned by someone you cared about and felt the unbearable emotional pain that brings? That's what it must have been for Jesus, though so much worse. If you've gone through this, understanding Christ's story might help you make sense of your own. When we understand—even somewhat—what Jesus suffered and feel along with him, we are participating with him in the anguish he experienced. We will fully know him. We will see how we're not alone.

As I worked on writing a study series with the focus on fellowship with God I wanted to get away from fellowshiping with Christ in his suffering. "Time to leave the suffering behind," I told a friend. I want more positives in my life. I want light, joy, hope, freedom, love. Isn't that what fellowship with God brings?

But you know, I'm learning to see that fellowship with God is to walk with him through *all* you might go through—the good *and* the bad. Being joyful and free from grief and sorrow is not a requirement when you follow God. You can be close to him wherever your mood might take you.

Whether we're going through valleys or over mountain tops, he'll be with us. If we're suffering, he's with us. If we're joyous he'll celebrate with us. When we stick by him, trust him, and let him lead we'll find a measure of healing. He's a friend who will always be with us.

Are you suffering? Jesus understands and joins you in it. Will you join him in his? You'll be close to someone who loves you deeply. Someone who has given his all for you.

But Jesus rose from death and suffering, and so can we.

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